Modesty Blaise

THE LONG LEVER

by PETER O'DONNELL and JIM HOLDAWAY

The LONG LEVER
RIO DE JANEIRO, WHERE A SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE OF UNESCO HAS GATHERED TO DISCUSS RADIO-COMMUNICATIONS IN SOUTH AMERICA

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
MEN OF THE UNITED STATES CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WHAT HAPPENED?
TEN MINUTES AGO I CHECKED KOSSUTH GETTING INTO THE ELEVATOR BY HOTEL RECEPTION — BRADY WAS ON THE FOURTH FLOOR TO CHECK HIM INTO HIS ROOM

WHEN THE ELEVATOR ARRIVED NO DR. KOSSUTH! THEY MUST HAVE GRABBED HIM WHEN IT STOPPED AT THE THIRD. I GUESS ...BUT HOW COULD THEY GET HIM AWAY, UNCONSCIOUS?
116

WE'LL PLAY MY HUNCH AND CHECK ON DE SÁ THAT MILLIONAIRE GUY KOSSUTH SPENT SOME TIME WITH
IT'S AN ANGLE... I HEARD DE SÁ'S YACHT'S SAILING TONIGHT

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
FOUR OF US TO GUARD ONE GUY... THE JOB SHOULD HAVE BEEN A MILK-RUN! I TELL YOU, FELLER — WASHINGTON'S GOING TO JUST LOVE US FOR LETTING THEIR DR. KOSSUTH GET SNATCHED
SOME THIRTY HOURS LATER... THE LOUNGE OF RAND'S CLUB IN PALL MALL ...
YOU CHOOSE THE WINE, WILLIE — WE'VE A GOOD CELLAR HERE, EH, MITCHELL?
YES INDEED, SIR GERALD
YOU WOULDN'T HAVE A RED VIN ORDINAIRE — A NICE ROUGH 'UN?
I'LL SEND OUT FOR A BOTTLE WITH PLEASURE, SIR — I THINK I KNOW JUST THE THING
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
HOW DO YOU DO IT, WILLIE? I MEAN, ORDER VIN ORDINAIRE AND WIN OLD MITCHELL'S APPROVAL! HE'D HAVE FROZEN ME!
I NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT IT, SIR G. — MUST BE A GIFT I SUPPOSE ...
OR MAYBE I GOT THE KNACK FROM MODESTY... SHE DRINKS THE ROUGH RED, AN' WAITERS RUN ROUND IN CIRCLES FOR HER
AH, YES ...MODESTY
I'M GLAD WE HAD THIS LUNCH-DATE FIXED — A RUSH JOB'S COME UP WHICH MAY BE QUITE NON-INFLAMMABLE, BUT MAY NOT... I'D LIKE YOU TO TAKE IT SOLO, WILLIE
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
WHAT KIND OF CAPER IS IT?
MY AMERICAN COLLEAGUES ARE IN A HOLE... THEY'VE ASKED ME TO HELP IF POSSIBLE, BUT THEY DON'T THINK I CAN,
FOR SUFFICIENT REASON, I PARTICULARLY WANT TO PULL SOMETHING OUT OF THE HAT FOR THEM ON THIS — AND I'VE A GOOD NOTION HOW IT CAN BE DONE
IF IT NEEDED TWO, I'D GO TO MODESTY BLAISE... BUT IT DOESN'T, AND THAT'S WHY I'M ASKING IF YOU'LL GO SOLO, WILLIE
OKAY... AS LONG AS MODESTY SAYS SO
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
BUT IF WE MENTION THIS TO MODESTY, SHE'LL WANT TO BE IN ON IT / DAMMIT WILLIE, I THOUGHT YOU'D BE GLAD TO KEEP HER FROM BEING PUT AT RISK
I'D NEVER TAKE A DEAD LIBERTY LIKE THAT, SIR G! MODESTY BLAISE IS HER OWN BOSS — AND MINE, WHEN IT COMES TO A CAPER
NOT IN HER VIEW, WILLIE, YOU KNOW THAT — SO WHY LET HER DECIDE FOR YOU ON THIS?
BECAUSE IT WORKS... IT'S WORKED FROM THE FIRST DAY I MET HER, WHEN SHE BOUGHT ME OUT OF JAIL IN SAIGON...

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
I WAS A RIGHT VILLAIN IN THOSE DAYS... MODESTY WAS ONLY TWENTY, BUT WELL IN THE BIG-TIME... SHE SPRANG ME FROM JAIL, TOOK ME TO A BAR, AN' SAT LOOKIN' AT ME...
"THEY TELL ME YOU'RE A RAT, WILLIE GARVIN," SHE SAYS, "BUT I THINK THERE'S A MAN INSIDE YOU TRYING TO GET OUT—A MAN I COULD USE"
SEEMED LIKE A PRINCESS, SHE DID... AND I KNEW SHE'D STARTED EVEN LOWER IN THE MUD THAN ME!... WHAT'S MORE, I RECKONED SHE WAS TALKIN' THE COLD TRUTH
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
TO CUT A LONG STORY SHORT, MODESTY TOOK ME BACK TO TANGIER WITH HER— AND IN SIX MONTHS SHE WAS TRUSTING ME LIKE HER RIGHT ARM
THAT COULDN'T 'VE HAPPENED WITH THE OLD WILLIE GARVIN, BELIEVE ME...
ALL RIGHT, WILLIE... SO YOU'LL ONLY TACKLE A JOB ON MODESTY'S SAY-SO— BECAUSE IT'S A WINNING SYSTEM...
SHALL WE RING AND FIND OUT IF SHE'LL BE AT HOME THIS AFTERNOON?
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
WILLIE?... I'M IN THE WORK ROOM
RIGHT, PRINCESS
HALLO, SIR GERALD— MAY I FINISH THIS FIRST AND REMEMBER MY MANNERS LATER?
MY DEAR, I MUCH PREFER AN INFORMAL WELCOME
WHEN WILLIE PHONED HE SAID IT WAS URGENT, SO YOU'D BETTER GO AHEAD AND TALK— I CAN LISTEN
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
DR. ALEXIUS KOSSUTH, AGE FORTY-FOUR, HUNGARIAN BY BIRTH, PRE-WAR REFUGEE FROM NAZIS, STUDENT IN GREECE, CAUGHT THERE WHEN GERMANS INVADED IN '41, HELD AT KALYROS INTERNMENT CAMP —
KALYROS? MY GOD, THAT HELL-HOLE...
WERE YOU THERE? DID YOU KNOW HIM?
I SPENT SOME MONTHS THERE... I'M NOT SURE WHEN... I WAS ABOUT SIX, AND ALONE BY THEN... ALL I REMEMBER IS WONDERING WHOSE FOOD I COULD STEAL SAFELY

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
KOSSUTH ESCAPED FROM GREECE AND EVENTUALLY GOT TO THE STATES... HE COMPLETED HIS STUDIES THERE, RETURNED HAPPILY TO HUNGARY AFTER THE WAR... AND WISHED HE HADN'T
YES... THE RAKOSI REGIME
HE MANAGED TO GET OUT AGAIN DURING THE REVOLT IN '56, BEFORE IT WAS CRUSHED, AND BECAME AN AMERICAN CITIZEN TWO YEARS LATER
BUT NOW THEY WANT HIM BACK— AND THEY'VE TAKEN HIM
126
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
KOSSUTH WAS KIDNAPPED IN RIO DE JANEIRO— SO NEATLY THAT AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE STILL CAN'T SEE HOW IT WAS WORKED
RED AGENTS DON'T NORMALLY MAKE A SNATCH SO FAR FROM HOME...
KOSSUTH MUST BE A HIGH-VALUE MAN
THE AMERICAN EVALUATION IS THAT THEY WOULD RATHER KNOW KOSSUTH WAS DEAD THAN HAVE HIS BRAINS PUMPED ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CURTAIN
127
THAT'S NOT A BRIEF FOR ACTION— IT'S SIMPLY A COLD EQUATION
AND NOT VALID — YOU CAN'T LIVE BY MATHS ALONE, EVEN IN THIS GAME
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
THIS POOR DEVIL KOSSUTH ... STRUGGLING FOR FREEDOM MOST OF HIS LIFE — AND NOW IT'S ALL WASTED
WHAT'S HE GOT THAT MAKES 'IM SO IMPORTANT, SIR G ?
POTENTIAL, MAINLY— HIS LINE OF WORK HAD LITTLE BEARING ON MILITARY POWER...
...UNTIL HE CAME UP WITH SOMETHING QUITE NEW IN THE FIELD OF THE LASER RAY
128
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
I'M AFRAID I'VE ONLY THE VAGUEST NOTION—
AND WHAT IS A LASER RAY, SIR GERALD?
IT'S A LIGHT-RAY, PRINCESS... BUT WITH THE PROPERTIES OF BEAM COLLIMATION AN' HIGH-POWER OUTPUT
COULD YOU RE-PHRASE THAT FOR MORONS, WILLIE, LOVE?
WELL... YOU SQUIRT LIGHT THROUGH A SYNTHETIC RUBY, AND THE BEAM STAYS PENCIL-THIN INSTEAD OF SPREADING— IT'LL STRIKE A HOLE IN A DIAMOND IN MILLIONTHS OF A SECOND!
129

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
THERE'S ONE THIN HOPE OF GETTING KOSSUTH BACK ...THE C.I.A. PEOPLE HAVE A SUSPICION, A HUNCH ONLY, THAT HE'S A PRISONER ABOARD THE FLAMENCO...
THE YACHT OF RAPHAEL DE SÁ, BRAZILIAN MILLIONAIRE, NOW TWO DAYS OUT FROM RIO, BOUND FOR FREETOWN—THEN THE MED, PERHAPS, AND THROUGH THE BOSPHORUS TO AN IRON CURTAIN PORT
A PRO-RED MILLIONAIRE?
DE SÁ IS PRO NOTHING BUT DE SÁ AND HIS FINANCIAL EMPIRE IS SHAKY—FOR ENOUGH MONEY, HE'D DO ANYTHING
130
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
I SUPPOSE THE YANKS CAN'T TAKE ACTION BECAUSE—
PAUSE FOR COFFEE, WILLIE—HERE, TRY THIS ON YOUR GIRL FRIEND, IT MIGHT BE EVEN BETTER THAN THE RIGHT BRAND OF CHOCOLATES
IT'S THE CLOSE SEASON JUST NOW, BUT THIS'LL KEEP—TA' THANKS, PRINCESS
IT'S A GARNET... CAMEO SCULPTURED... SUPERB!
MY GOD, WILLIE, SHE CAN'T MEAN YOU TO GIVE THIS TO-AH-TO SOMEBODY?
SHE DON'T GIVE WITH STRINGS, Y'KNOW! BUT YOU NEEDN'T SWEAT—I GOT A COLLECTION OF 'EM THAT YOU CAN COME AN' SEE SOMETIME
131
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
YOU'D BETTER KNOW NOW, SIR GERALD—I WANT TO BE IN ON THIS KOSSUTH AFFAIR... UNLESS IT WOULD WEAKEN WHATEVER PLAN YOU HAVE IN MIND
I...CAN'T PRETEND IT WOULD
132
YOU HAVE A SPECIAL FELLOW—FEELING FOR KOSSUTH, I THINK... BECAUSE HE'S VIRTUALLY BEEN A LIFE LONG REFUGEE?
YES
WELL, THAT'S IT, SIR G... I DON'T GO SOLO, IT'S EITHER BOTH OF US OR NEITHER
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
THE AMERICANS DAREN'T HAVE THEIR NAVY STOP DE SÁ'S YACHT TO LOOK FOR KOSSUTH—NOT UNLESS THEY CAN BE ONE HUNDRED PERCENT SURE OF FINDING HIM
THAT MEANS GETTING SOMEBODY ABOARD WHO CAN FIND OUT—AND THEN PASS THE WORD AT A PORT OF CALL
NICE RAISINS, WILLIE?
M'MM, LOVELY
133
THEY THOUGHT ME MIGHT BE ABLE TO GET A MAN ABOARD AT FREETOWN...
HOW? BY MESMERISM? IF THE HUNCH IS RIGHT, DE SÁ WILL TAKE ON SUPPLIES BY TENDER AND YOU WOULDN'T GET A MOUSE ABOARD

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
NOW I KNOW YOU LIKE TO DEVISE YOUR OWN PLANS, MODESTY, BUT—
I'LL ALWAYS BUY ONE OFF THE PEG IF IT'S A GOOD FIT, SIR GERALD... HAVE YOU AN IDEA FOR GETTING US ABOARD DE SA'S YACHT?
WELL... THERE ARE THESE ODD PEOPLE WHO CRUISE ROUND THE WORLD IN LITTLE SAILING-BOATS... AND THEY COULD STRIKE TROUBLE AND HAVE TO TAKE TO A RUBBER DINGHY...
134
WE COULD CERT'NLY 'VE USED YOU IN THE OLD DAYS, SIR G! HONEST YOU GOT THE MAKINGS OF A LOVELY CROOK
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
THE AMERICANS ARE KEEPING TABS ON THE FLAMENCO WITH A HIGH-FLYING PLANE... WE CAN PLACE YOU WHERE SHE'S BOUND TO PASS WITHIN A FEW MILES
WE BOTH GOT A GOOD TAN, PRINCESS— BUT WE OUGHTER BE A BIT BURNT FROM A DAY OR SO IN AN OPEN DINGHY
A LITTLE FRYING UNDER LAMPS OUGHT TO COVER THAT, WILLIE, LOVE
135
WHAT ABOUT DOCUMENTS? SHIP'S PAPERS?
I HAVE THE VERY BEST FORGERS, MY DEAR
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
IT'S A WORKABLE PLAN... ALL WE NEED NOW IS A DETAILED COVER-STORY AND BACKGROUND FOR WILLIE AND ME
'OW DO WE GET TO MID-ATLANTIC, SIR G?
'YOU FLY TO BRITISH GUIANA ...'BRIGA TRANSPORT' HAVE A FLYING-BOAT THERE WHICH CAN DO THE JOB, AND THEY'RE WILLING TO CHARTER IT
WE'LL NEED A PHOTOGRAPH OF DR KOSSUTH ...I WANT TO KNOW WHAT HE LOOKS LIKE
134
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
WILLIE...I SUPPOSE MODESTY REALISES THAT WE'LL HAVE TO CAST YOU AS HUSBAND AND WIFE ON THIS OPERATION— AND MAKE IT STICK?
'COURSE SHE DOES
LOOK, SHE'S DUG BULLETS OUT AN' PUT STITCHES IN ME... AN' I ONCE SICK-NURSED HER NIGHT AN' DAY FOR THREE WEEKS— THE LOT! SHE WOULDN'T LET ANYONE ELSE DO IT...
137
SO IF YOU DO GET US ABOARD THE FLAMENCO AS MR. AN' MRS., WE'RE NOT LIKELY TO GIVE OURSELVES AWAY BY ACTING STUPID

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
IN THE HOUR BEFORE DAWN; A FLYING-BOAT LANDS IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC, NEAR THE EQUATOR
ALL SET, SQUIRE? YOU'RE A HUNDRED ODD MILES NORTH-EAST OF THE POSITION WE GOT BY RADIO TEN MINUTES AGO
THANKS, MATEY... LET'S GET THIS DINGHY OUT
138
I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE HELL YOU'RE DOING, BUT... WELL, TAKE CARE OF YOURSELVES
WE'LL REMEMBER — AND YOU'D BETTER START FORGETTING NOW
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
BURNING SUN RISES OVER THE SOUTH ATLANTIC
BLIMEY, I FEEL DEAD SOPPY SITTING 'ERE LIKE THIS, PRINCESS
IT'LL PASS WHEN THINGS GET STARTED, WILLIE...
...LET'S HAVE A FINAL RUN-THROUGH OF THE INFO ON DE SÁ
YOU RECKON THIS CAPER'LL HOT UP, THEN? THAT KOSSUTH IS ABOARD THE YACHT?
THAT'S THE C.I.A. HUNCH... AND WE USUALLY FOUND THOSE BOYS WERE GOOD GUESSERS IN THE DAYS WHEN WE WERE MARKETING INTELLIGENCE
139
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
HANGERS-ON, IT SEEMS... I GUESS WE KNOW THE TYPE, WILLIE
SO DE SÁ'S GOT A CREW OF FOURTEEN PLUS STEWARDS, AN' SIX OR SEVEN GUESTS
THE PLAYBOYS AND PLAYGIRLS WHO LIVE EASY BY TRADING THEIR GAY COMPANY IN RETURN FOR BED AND BOARD
M'MM... AND 'OW DO ME STRIKE 'EM, PRINCESS? DOMESTIC BLISS OR OAT AN' DOG?
140
JUST WELL SUITED, I THINK... ...OH, YOU'LL HAVE TO DITCH YOUR PRINCIPLES AND STOP DROPPING AITCHES, OR WE MIGHT SEEM ILL-ASSORTED, WILLIE LOVE
TALK ABOUT STOP AT NOTHING!
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
NOON, ABOARD THE FLAMENCO
BRIDGE TO SENOR DE SÁ — SMOKE FLARE OFF THE STARBOARD BOW... ABOUT TEN KILOMETRES
141
FLOATING OBJECT... A RUBBER DINGHY... THERE IS MOVEMENT ABOARD
COME ROUND ON COURSE FOR IT, CASADO

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
SHE'S TURNING TOWARDS US, WILLIE—YOU CAN SINK THE EMERGENCY TRANSMITTER AND THE BRIEFING PAPERS NOW
IS IT WISE TO PICK THEM UP, DE SÀ?
DON'T BE STUPID—WE HAVE TO! DO YOU IMAGINE THEY'RE AMERICAN AGENTS?
THEY COULD BE—MY PURPOSE HERE IS TO SUSPECT ALL THINGS
I CAN HARDLY OFFER MY FOOLISH GUESTS THAT REASON FOR LEAVING PEOPLE TO DIE, KAVERIN! AH, THERE ARE TWO... AND ONE IS A WOMAN!
142
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, SEÑORA?
YES... YES, THANK YOU ...IT'S ONLY BEEN THREE DAYS, BUT WE—WE THOUGHT...
WE THOUGHT OUR CHANCES OF BEING PICKED UP WERE NIL! MY GOD, WE'RE GLAD TO SEE YOU... OH, I'M BILL CHEYNEY, AND THIS IS MY WIFE, MOLLY
ARE YOU ALONE? FROM WHAT WERE YOU WRECKED? HOW DID IT HAPPEN?
REALLY, KAVERIN—LATER!
YOU'RE MOST WELCOME, MRS. CHEYNEY—I AM DE SÀ, OWNER OF THE FLAMENCO
143
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
DO EXCUSE KAVERIN—HE IS A WRITER, AND A GLUTTON FOR DETAIL. THE REST OF US NEITHER TOIL NOR SPIN...
BUT WE'RE JUST AS EAGER AS HE IS TO HEAR YOUR STORY—WHEN YOU ARE REFRESHED AND RESTED...
I'VE GOT THE SHIP'S PAPERS AND THE LAST THREE WEEKS OF OUR LOG HERE
THANK YOU... AND WE HAVE A SPARE CABIN, SO JUST FOLLOW THE STEWARD AND TELL HIM IF THERE'S ANYTHING YOU WANT
WE'D HAVE SETTLED FOR THE HOLD OF A BANANA BOAT, EH, MOLLY? AND NOW ALL THIS!
144
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
WILLIE GARVIN CHECKS THE CABIN AND BATH-CUBICLE THOROUGHLY
IT'S NOT BUGGED, PRINCESS, WE CAN TALK ...SO HOW D'YOU SEE THIS CAPER NOW?
IT'S NOT A DUD, WILLIE...
145
THAT MAN KAVERIN DOESN'T FIT—DID YOU CATCH HIS ACCENT? HE'S FROM WAY EAST OF BUDAPEST... AND HERE ON A WATCHING BRIEF, I FANCY
MY FANCY, TOO... SO WE'D BETTER HIDE THE TOOLS, EH? THIS CABIN'S BOUND TO GET SEARCHED

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
THAT DE SA SAVE YOU THE X-RAY EYES LOOK, PRINCESS — SO DID THE BEACH-BALL BOYS
YES...AND THE GIRLS RAN A MICROMETER OVER YOU, WILLIE — IT'S A FRIENDLY SHIP, I GUESS
SO HOW DO WE PLAY THAT ANGLE?
CAREFULLY, BY EAR... BUT IF BEING DAZZLED INTO A ROMANCE LOOKS LIKE PAYING OFF, THEN ANYTHING GOES
WHEN DO WE START LOOKING FOR KOSSUTH?
NOT FOR TWO DAYS... BUT YOU SHOW INTEREST IN THE ENGINE-ROOM, WILLIE — GET THE RUN OF THE CREW'S QUARTERS
146
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
IN DE SA'S STATEROOM...
...STRUCK AT NIGHT... BOTTOM RIPPED FROM KETCH... PERHAPS BY FLOATING MINE OR SUBMERGED WRECK...
YOU THINK THEY ARE NOT INTELLIGENCE AGENTS, THOSE CHEYNEYS?
147
THEIR PAPERS ARE GOOD, THEIR LOG IS PLAUSIBLE... AND ABOVE ALL THEY ARE NOT AMERICANS, BUT ENGLISH — CERTAINLY NOT C.I.A. PEOPLE!
THE FIRST TWO FACTS ARE WHAT ONE WOULD EXPECT ANYWAY... AS FOR THE THIRD, THESE CAPITALIST SPY ORGANISATIONS WORK HAND IN GLOVE WITH ONE ANOTHER
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
I THINK WE MUST OFFER THESE TWO A BAIT — WHICH, IF THEY TAKE IT, WILL PROVE THEY ARE HERE SEEKING KOSSUTH
I DO HOPE THEY'RE NOT, KAVERIN... I HAVE A FEELING THERE IS SOMETHING SLUMBERING IN MRS. CHEYNEY THAT IT MIGHT BE EXCITING TO AWAKEN...
148
AND IN THE CABIN OF "MR. AND MRS. CHEYNEY"...
LET'S GO UP NOW, WILLIE — A NICE PERFIDENT MANNER, PLEASE, AND DO WATCH YOUR SENSE OF HUMOUR... I DON'T WANT YOU ASKING AUTHOR KAVERIN EXACTLY WHAT HE WRITES!
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
DRINKS BEFORE DINNER ABOARD THE FLAMENCO
AH! OUR NEW GUESTS! MRS. CHEYNEY YOU LOOK WONDERFUL
IT'S JUST MY BORROWED PLUMES, REALLY — YOU'VE ALL BEEN VERY KIND TO FIX US UP SO NICELY
I AM MARGARITA — YOU SEET BESIDE ME AND I WEEL HEAR YOUR ADVENTURES, YES? I LIKE ALWAYS TO BE THREEELED
OH... DELIGHTED, MISS-UM-MARGARITA ...IT'S NOT VERY THRILLING, BUT — ER...
149

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
YOU'VE REALLY HAD US FORCED ON YOU ALL THE WAY TO FREETOWN, SENOR DE SÁ—
JUST DE SÁ. MY DEAR... WE SHALL CALL YOU MOLLY, AND WE ARE HAPPY TO HAVE YOU
MY HUSBAND'S LONGING TO SEE OVER YOUR BEAUTIFUL SHIP— HE'S QUITE OVERWHELMED BY IT
TOMORROW WE WILL MAKE A TOUR...
150
BUT MEANWHILE, LET US DRINK TO... WHAT SHALL IT BE? TO BEING OVERWHELMED PERHAPS?
ER-YES, I SUPPOSE SO... THIS IS CERTAINLY A BIG EXPERIENCE FOR US
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
A NEW DAY... AND THE FLAMENCO SAILS ON WITH ITS UNEXPECTED GUESTS
AH, I SEE— AND WHAT'S THE CRUISING RADIUS?
SIX THOUSAND MILES, SENOR...
THE DIESELS RUN AT 230 R.P.M. AND GIVE A TOTAL OF NEARLY TWO THOUSAND HORSE-POWER
151
LET'S LEAVE YOUR HUSBAND TO ENJOY THESE TECHNICAL MATTERS— WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THE OWNER'S SUITE?
OH— YOUR SUITE? YES, I'D LOVE TO
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
BILL! IF YOU CAN SPARE ME A MINUTE...?
FOUR DAYS SINCE "MR. AND MRS. CHEYNEY" WERE PICKED UP— AND FREETOWN NOW LIES ONLY TWELVE HOURS AWAY...
OH-ER, YES, OF COURSE, DARLING
THERE WILL NOW BE A DOMESTIC TIFF IN THE CABIN, I THINK— MR. CHEYNEY HAS A WANDERING EYE, KAVERIN
AND... MRS. CHEYNEY?
152
ELUSIVE, I FEAR... AT ONE TIME SHE SEEMED VERY PROMISING, BUT—
PERHAPS SHE DECIDED YOU ARE NOT THE TYPE TO LET SLIP SECRETS IN THE BOUDOIR, DE SÁ...
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
WELL... YOUR SUSPECTS HAVE NOT TAKEN THE BAIT WE LAID, KAVERIN
IF THEY ARE WHAT THEY MIGHT BE, THERE IS STILL TIME
I'N MODESTY AND WILLIE'S CABIN...
WE'VE CHECKED EVERY INCH OF THE SHIP— 'CEPT ONE PLACE WE HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO GET AT EASY
I KNOW... AND IF KOSSUTH'S ABOARD, THAT'S WHERE HE'S GOT TO BE
153
I DON'T LIKE IT SOMEHOW, PRINCESS — MAKES MY EARS PRICKLE
CAN'T BE HELPED, WILLIE LOVE... STICKING OUR NECKS OUT IS WHAT WE'RE HERE FOR

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
GOING TO BE DODGY, CHECKING IF KOSSUTH'S IN THERE
IT FIGURES, WILLIE THAT SMALL CABIN ON THE LOWER DECK IS THE ONLY PLACE ON THE SHIP THAT'S ALWAYS KEPT LOCKED
THAT'S WHY WE'VE COVERED EVERY OTHER ANGLE FIRST
OKAY. TONIGHT THEN?
I'LL HAVE TO BE – WE REACH FREETOWN BEFORE DAWN AND WE'VE GOT TO KNOW WHETHER KOSSUTH IS ABOARD BEFORE WE GET OFF
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
AN HOUR AFTER MIDNIGHT.
SURE YOU WON'T NEED ME, WILLIE?
SUPPOSE DO FIND KOSSUTH – ANY ACTION?
SAFER ON ME OWN PRINCESS – I'LL BE BACK IN TEN MINUTES. AND IF I'M CAUGHT PROWLING I'M AN ERRANT HUSBAND GOIN' TO MARSAR TA
ALONE – WE JUST REPORT TO SIR GERALD'S MAN IN FREETOWN, AND THE AMERICAN NAVY WILL TAKE IT FROM THERE
YEAH. SEEMS ALMOST TOO DULL TO BE TRUE I RECKON
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
WILLIE GARVIN MOVES LIKE A SHADOW THROUGH THE SLEEPING SHIP . . .
IF KOSSUTH'S HERE, LET'S HOPE THEY'VE GOT HIM UNDER SEDATION, LIKE THE PRINCESS RECKONS – DON'T WANT HIM TO START CREATING . . .
THE PICKLOCK PROBES. AND TURNS
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
IN THE SMALL CABIN WHICH IS ALWAYS KEPT LOCKED
AHH. WE'VE IT THE JACKPOT. THAT'S GOTTER BE DR KOSSUTH. .
WHY MR CHEYNEY! ARE YOU LOOKING FOR SOMETHING?
KAVERIN! BUT IT'S NOT HIS CABIN!
I – I'M ON THE WRONG DECK! I THOUGHT THIS WAS MARSAR TA'S CABIN; I BEEN DRINKING, WAITING FOR MY WIFE TO GO TO SLEEP – OH MY GOD. DON'T MENTION THIS TO HER!

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
WILLIE IMPROVISES DESPERATELY...
SO SORRY I BLUNDERED IN ON YOU MR KAVERIN BUT SQUIFFY I'M AFRAID. MARGARITA TOLD ME TO COME AND THE DOOR WAS OPEN—BUT THIS MUST BE THE LOWER DECK...!
YES... WELL, I— I'LL BUZZ ALONG, THEN... HER CABIN'S ON THE [redacted] DECK, OF COURSE
DON'T APOLOGISE MR CHEYNEY WE ALL MAKE MISTAKES DON'T WE?
TERRIBLY SORRY—
UHH!
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
NOON IN THE HARBOUR AT FREETOWN, EIGHT HOURS AFTER THE FLAMENCO'S ARRIVAL.
SORRY TO CURTAIL THE CRUISE MY DEARS. BUT BUSINESS YOU KNOW. AND I'VE ARRANGED FLIGHTS HOME FOR YOU ALL.
STRANGE. THOSE CHEYNEY'S SLIPPING ASHORE AFTER WE ANCHORED LAST NIGHT, DE SA!
AMAZING! BUT THEY HAVE GONE AND SO HAS THE R RUBBER DINGHY! I HAVE REPORTED THE MATTER, OF COURSE
BELOW IN THEIR CABIN, "THE CHEYNEYS" LIE DRUGGED AND HANDCUFFED TO A TABLE BOLTED TO THE FLOOR
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
THE FLAMENCO SAILS FROM FREETOWN...
WELL, KAVERIN... OUR FRIEND CHEYNEY, IF THAT IS HIS NAME, HAS COME ROUND NOW —THE DRUG HAS NOT YET WORN OFF WITH THE WOMAN.
D'D HE BLUSTER AND THREATEN?
HE SIMPLY TURNED H S FACE TO THE WALL! HOW OFTEN ONE FINDS LACK OF MORAL FIBRE IN THE MERE PROFESSIONAL —OH, NO OFFENCE INTENDED, MY DEAR KAVERIN!
IN THE CABIN, WILLIE STRIKES WITH SKILLED ACCURACY TO SPRING THE HANDCUFF
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
COME ON PRINCESS - WAKE UP!
WAKE UP, NOW, THERE'S A GOOD G'RL
UHHH...
WILLIE.. WHAT THE HELL...?
WE GOT NOBBLED! DE SA'S DUMPED ALL 'IS GUESTS AT FREETOWN AND I RECKON WE'LL BE NEXT OFF— BUT AT SEA!

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
ALL RIGHT, WILLIE — I'M AWAKE NOW. FILL ME IN
THEY MUST'VE FIGURED WE COULD BE PHONIES, SO THEY SET UP THAT LOCKED CABIN AS A BAIT
I FOUND KAVERIN THERE! AN' NEXT MINUTE SOMEONE CONKED ME WITH A CLUB FROM BEHIND
NO SIGN OF KOSSUTH?
NONE! LOOK, YOU'D BETTER GET DRIED OFF, PRINCESS.. DE'SA MIGHT LOOK IN AGAIN SOON, AND WE'RE S'POSED TO BE SHACKLED
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
WILLIE TAKES OUT THE LOOSENED SCREWS OF THE VENTILATOR— COVER . . .
HOW'D THEY GET YOU, THEN?
GIFT-WRAPPED ON A VELVET CUSHION ...I STARTED WORRYING WHEN YOU DIDN'T COME BACK AFTER HALF AN HOUR...
SO I GOT DRESSED AND WENT TO THAT CABIN LOOKING FOR YOU... THEY WERE WAITING, OF COURSE.. GUN IN MY NECK AND A NEEDLE IN MY ARM
SORRY, WILLIE LOVE— I WASN'T SMART
IT WAS NICE THOUGH, PRINCESS... LET'S NOT GET TOO SMART TO WORRY ABOUT EACH OTHER, EH?
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
OKAY?
FINE
GOOD THING WE H'D THE TOOLS SOON AS WE GOT ABOARD
IF THE CREW'S BEHIND DE'SA WE'LL HAVE A DOZEN MEN AGAINST US, WILLIE, MUCH TOO MANY
HOSTAGE PLAY? GRAB DE'SA AND -
NO, IT'S THE WRONG SCHOOL FOR THAT GAME. JUST MAKE LIKE WE'RE HANDCUFFED AGAIN, WILLIE, AND TELL ME— WHERE THE HELL IS KOSSUTH?
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
OUR DR. KOSSUTH HAD TO BE IN THAT LOCKED CABIN. BUT HE WASN'T! SO IF HE'S NOT ABOARD, WHY HAVE THEY WALLED US? AND IF HE'S — THEN WHERE?
LOOKS LIKE WE'VE M SSED A TRICK SOMEWHERE
BUT WE'RE NOT THE ONLY ONES! GENUINE OLD REGULATION 'CUFFS — I ASK YOU!
A KEY TURNS IN THE DOOR.
NO ACTION YET, WILLIE— WE'RE DOPEY AND WE'RE BEAT!

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
AH, NO INDIGNANT PROTESTS? NO OUTRAGED DEMANDS TO KNOW THE MEANING OF THIS? I'M SO GLAD I'D FEEL EMBARRASSED FOR YOU IF YOU TRIED TO BLUFF
WHAT HAPPENS NOW?
WELL, I WAS FOR KILLING YOU RIGHT AWAY BUT THAT DREARY MAN KAVERIN INSISTS ON GETTING SANCTION FROM HIS SUPERIORS
HE'S SENT A MESSAGE — WHICH MUST GO THROUGH TWO RELAY SHIPS. IF YOU PLEASE THERE WILL BE A REPLY SOMETIME TONIGHT, BUT IT WON'T AFFECT MY DECISION
I'M SORRY YOU HAVE TO BE PUT DOWN ESPECIALLY YOU, MY DEAR — BUT I SHALL DO IT, WHATEVER KAVERIN'S SUPERIORS SAY
YOUR... YOUR CREW WON'T
THEY'RE ALL HANDPICKED, AND THEY KNOW THIS TRIP WILL PAY ME ONE MILLION DOLLARS, ENOUGH TO SAVE THE DE SA EMPIRE... AND THEY ARE PART OF THAT EMPIRE
A MILLION...? SO YOU HAVE GOT KOSSUTH ABOARD?
IT'S HARDLY WORTH YOUR WHILE TO WORRY ABOUT THAT QUESTION NOW I'M AFRAID
LISTEN, DE SA — WE CAN GET YOU MORE THAN A MILLION DOLLARS FOR KOSSUTH
YOU'RE ASSUMING I'VE GOT HIM. AREN'T YOU?
AND IF I HAD, I'M BOUND TO REMEMBER THAT KAVERIN'S SERVICE PRACTISES VENGEANCE — UNLIKE YOUR WESTERN INTELLIGENCE SERVICES...
BESIDES, I'M AN HONEST MAN — WHEN I'M BOUGHT, I STAY BOUGHT
WELL, WHAT'S OUR CAPER NOW, PRINCESS?
GETTING OUT ALIVE, WILLIE — BUT WE CAN'T WIN IN A STAND-UP FIGHT
WE'LL WAIT TILL HALFWAY THROUGH THE MIDDLE WATCH... THERE'LL ONLY BE ONE OFFICER AND THE HELMSMAN ON THE BRIDGE — KILL THEM, AND RUN THE SHIP AGROUND
I GUESS WE'LL BE SOMEWHERE NORTH OF CONAKRY... SANDY COAST BACKED BY MANGROVE FOREST... THINK YOU CAN COPE, WILLIE LOVE?
I WAS WITH THE FOREIGN LEGION PARAS IN THE JUNGLE AROUND DIEN BIEN PHU — YOU EITHER COPED OR CROAKED

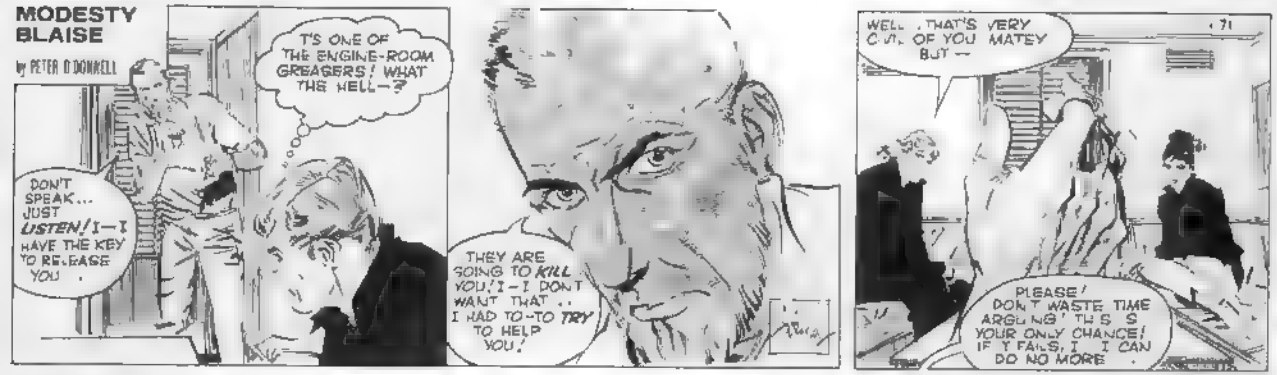
MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

AT TWO IN THE MORNING..
TIME TO GO, PRINCESS.. I BEEN WORRIED THEY MIGHT COME AN' KNOCK US OFF BEFORE WE MADE OUR MOVE!
WHY SHOULD THEY WORK NIGHTS, WILLIE? THEY FIGURE WE'LL KEEP TILL MORNING
Shh!
A KEY TURNS IN THE DOOR OF THE CABIN. AND..
Please NO NOISE!
170

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL


T'S ONE OF THE ENGINE-ROOM GREASERS! WHAT THE HELL—?
DON'T SPEAK... JUST LISTEN! I—I HAVE THE KEY TO RELEASE YOU.
THEY ARE GOING TO KILL YOU! I—I DON'T WANT THAT.. I HAD TO—TO TRY TO HELP YOU!
WELL.. THAT'S VERY CIVIL OF YOU MATEY BUT—
171
PLEASE! DON'T WASTE TIME ARGUING! THIS IS YOUR ONLY CHANCE! IF IT FAILS, I CAN DO NO MORE.

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

HANDS TREMBLING, THE STRANGER BENDS TO UNLOCK WILLIE'S HANDCUFFS
YOUR RUBBER DINGHY—IT'S HIDDEN IN NUMBER TWO LIFEBOAT... I—I DON'T KNOW IF YOU CAN LAUNCH IT UNSEEN—
WILLIE
CHILL HIM!
172
WHAT WAS THAT FOR?
HE'S THE TRICK WE MISSED, WILLIE—THAT'S OUR DR KOSSUTH!

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

HE'S KOSSUTH?
YES, WITH A FEW DAYS' BEARD
WE WERE LOOKING FOR A PRISONER, WILLIE— AND HE'S ON BOARD WILLINGLY! I DON'T KNOW WHY... BUT THAT'S WHAT FAZED US
HE'LL BE OUT FOR A WHILE— YOU CAN COME BACK FOR HIM AFTER WE'VE TAKEN THE BRIDGE
WE PLAYING ROUGH, PRINCESS? THE KNIVES?
NOT IF WE CAN AVOID IT— YOU HIT YOUR WAY, WILLIE LOVE, I'LL USE THE KONGO
173

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
ON THE BRIDGE OF THE FLAMENCO... A HELMSMAN AND THE OFFICER OF THE WATCH
GIVE ME TWO MINUTES TO REACH THE STARBOARD LADDER WILLIE — THEN WHOEVER'S NEARER THE OFFICER TAKES HIM FIRST...
THE HELMSMAN SHOULD HAVE HIS EYES DOWN, WATCHING THE COMPASS — SO THE OTHER ONE TAKES HIM, OKAY?
CHECK
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
THE KONGO, OR YAWARA STICK... JUST A SMALL WOODEN DUMB-BELL... BUT A POWERFUL WEAPON WHEN USED BY A SKILLED HAND TO STRIKE AT THE NERVE-CENTRES OF THE BODY
THE OFFICER'S NEARER MODESTY'S SIDE... WAIT FOR HER TO TAKE 'IM...
AS MODESTY MOVES, THE MAN TURNS...
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
MODESTY JABS WITH THE KONGO, AND THE ARM REACHING TOWARDS THE ALARM IS PARALYZED...
AN INSTANT LATER, THE KONGO HAMMERS HOME ON A NERVE-CENTRE FOR THE KNOCKOUT
CHECK AROUND, PRINCESS— I'LL TAKE THE WHEEL
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
ALL CLEAR, PRINCESS?
YES, EVERYBODY'S ASLEEP—THERE'S NOBODY ON DECK OR IN THE CHART ROOM
I'LL TAKE HER NOW—YOU BRING KOSSUTH UP TO THE PORT GANGWAY AND GET IT LOWERED, WILLIE. BETTER GAG — HIM IF HE LOOKS LIKE WAKING UP
MODESTY SPINS THE WHEEL AND THE FLAMENCO COMES SMOOTHLY ROUND... HEADING STRAIGHT FOR THE WILD COAST OF GUINEA

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
RIGHT... WE'LL BE NIPPING THE BEACH IN ABOUT THREE MINUTES
ALL SET, PRINCESS — AN' KOSSUTH'S STILL OUT COLD
RING 'FULL AHEAD' FOR ME, WILLIE LOVE WE'VE GOT TO PLOUGH WELL INTO THE SHALLOWS— THEN TAKE KOSSUTH DOWN THE GANGWAY AND HANG ON TIGHT
THE FLAMENCO WEAVES BETWEEN SMALL, SWAMPY ISLANDS. THEN, QUIVERING AS THE KEEL CUTS INTO SOFT SAND, SHE THRUSTS ON
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
A LONG JUDDER SHAKES THE FLAMENCO AS SHE SLOWS TO A HALT HARD AGROUND
WHAT THE DEVIL—?
BRIDGE! ANSWER, DAMN YOU!
KEEP GOING WHEN YOU HIT THE BEACH, WILLIE - STRAIGHT INTO THE FOREST. I'LL COVER YOU
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
CHAOS ABOARD THE FLAMENCO...
DE SÀ! WHAT—?
WE'RE AGROUND! IT'S THOSE TWO—!
GOMEZ! GET ON THE SEARCHLIGHT! CASADO! I WANT THE WHOLE CREW ON DECK— EVERY MAN WITH A GUN!
KOSSUTH, REVIVING BEGINS TO STRUGGLE
NO! PLEASE — YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND!
THAT'S LIFE MATEY NOW BELT UP!
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
KOSSUTH STRUGGLES WILDLY
I'LL 'AVE TO CHILL 'IM AGAIN, PRINCESS
NO— I'LL TAKE HIM, IT'S QUICKER
THEY'LL HAVE THAT SEARCHLIGHT GOING ANY MOMENT NOW
THE KONGO, GRIPPED HARD AGAINST A NERVE IN THE WRIST, GIVES COMPLETE CONTROL
RIGHT! THIS WON'T HURT TOO MUCH SO LONG AS YOU DON'T FIGHT IT, DOCTOR... NOW, RUN, DAMN YOU!

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
THE SEARCHLIGHT STABS OUT AND MOVES SLOWLY ACROSS THE BEACH . . .
THERE! HOLD IT!
TOO LATE, DE SA—THEY HAVE REACHED COVER
THEY WON'T MOVE FAR BY N GHT . . . I'LL HAVE A PARTY OUT BY FIRST LIGHT
CASADO! HAVE AN ANCHOR DROPPED WELL ASTERN BY ONE OF THE LIFE-BOATS, AND START KEDGING THE SH P OFF
IT MAY BE A BIG TASK, SENOR—WE ARE VERY HARD AGROUND IN THIS SAND
181
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
IN THE COVER OF THE JUNGLE...
THIS IS YOUR KIND OF TERRAIN, WILLIE—SO YOU'RE THE BIG WHEEL
WE'LL MOVE INLAND HALF A-MILE THEN SETTLE DOWN FOR THE NIGHT
YOU CAN REckON WE'RE OVER THE 'UMP NOW, PRINCESS... THEY'D NEED NATIVE TRACKERS TO PICK US UP IN THIS LOT
PLEASE...
ALL RIGHT, MATEY, I'LL TAKE YOU IN TANDEM NOW—I BROUGHT THE CUFFS ALONG
183
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
WON'T BE A COMFY TRIP TO CONAKRY PRINCESS, BUT WE'LL MAKE OUT... THERE'S FRUIT, NUTS, SMALL GAME, AN' A LOT OF RIVERS
YOU MUST LET ME GO! I—I KNOW YOU'RE TRYING TO HELP, BUT—
WE WERE KOSSUTH.. WE THOUGHT YOU'D BEEN KIDNAPPED, AND WE CAME TO GET YOU BACK
NOW WE FIND YOU'VE RATTED.. BUT WE'RE TAKING YOU BACK JUST THE SAME—YOU'RE A VERY IMPORTANT PROPERTY
184
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
IN A ROCKY HOLLOW .
SAFE ENOUGH TO 'AVE A LITTLE FIRE SMOULDERING, IT'LL HELP KEEP THE RUDDY INSECTS OFF
'AS OUR V.I.P. SAID ANYTHING YET, PRINCESS?
WHAT CAN HE SAY..?
SUCH A CAPABLE YOUNG WOMAN... AND SO ARROGANT... READY TO JUDGE WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE
YOU WERE A REFUGEE, KOSSUTH— THAT MADE YOU A GOOD CAUSE IN MY BOOK
185
BUT NOW YOU'RE RUNNING BACK TO THE PEOPLE YOU SPENT HALF YOUR LIFE RUNNING AWAY FROM— AND I HATE A MASOCHIST
A SUBTLE DIAGNOSIS, YOUNG WOMAN... BUT WRONG

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
ON THE FLAMENCO
IF I CAN'T HAVE KOSSUTH ALIVE, I WANT HIM DEAD, DE SÁ — AND THE PRICE WILL BE REDUCED ACCORDINGLY
I'LL GET HIM BACK ALIVE . .
TO MOVE SOUTH, THEY MUST GO UP-RIVER TO FIND A PLACE TO CROSS. I'LL TAKE A PARTY UP BY BOAT TO CATCH THEM
BY THE JUNGLE...
GOOD... LET'S HAVE ONE ALL ROUND WHILE DR KOSSUTH EXPOUNDS ON WHAT MAKES HIM TICK
I RECKON THESE FAGS 'AVE DRIED OUT GLOUGH NOW, PRINCESS
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
I WILL TELL YOU WHY I AGREED TO GO BACK TO HUNGARY... YOU WILL DESPISE MY SENSE OF VALUES, OF COURSE, BUT I AM NOT ASHAMED
FOR ONE REASON ONLY. BECAUSE THEY HAVE MY CHILD THERE
YOUR CHILD? BUT YOU WERE NEVER MARRIED!
YOUNG WOMAN... I DO ASSURE YOU THAT MARRIAGE IS NOT ALWAYS A CONDITION PRECEDENT OF FATHERHOOD...
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
WE WERE IN LOVE, AND WE PLANNED TO MARRY. BUT THEN CAME THE REVOLT IN HUNGARY AND I WAS AMONG THE THOUSANDS WHO ESCAPED
BUT NOT THE WOMAN?
NO. ANNA HAD GONE TO HER HOME IN MISKOLC. I THOUGHT SHE WOULD FOLLOW ME. BUT THE RISING WAS CRUSHED TOO QUICKLY
I GIVE YOU THE TRUTH. I LOVED MY FREEDOM MORE THAN I LOVED ANNA. BUT IF I HAD KNOWN SHE WAS TO BEAR MY CHILD I WOULD HAVE STAYED
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
MY DAUGHTER IS SIX YEARS OLD NOW... AND ANNA, HER MOTHER, DIED WHEN SHE WAS BORN
WHEN DID YOU LEARN ALL THIS?
ONLY WHEN DE SÁ MADE CONTACT WITH ME IN RIO DE JANEIRO... SHOWED ME DOCUMENTS, PHOTOGRAPHS, RECORDS... A LETTER FROM ANNA'S SISTER CONFIRMED BY A SPANISH DIPLOMAT WHOM I TRUST COMPLETELY
OH, THE PROOF IS POSITIVE ENOUGH... I WOULD DOUBT IT IF I COULD. BELIEVE ME
STREWTH, THIS'LL RIP THE PRINCESS APART.

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
SO I HAVE NEVER SEEN THIS CHILD OF MINE. BUT HER SAFETY AND HAPPINESS MEAN MORE TO ME THAN POWER GROUPS OR MILITARY SECRETS. THAT'S WHY I WAS GOING BACK
WHERE IS SHE NOW?
IT IS POLITE OF YOU TO ASK. BUT I HARDLY THINK YOU CAN IMAGINE WHAT IT IS TO BE A SMALL GIRL, QUITE ALONE, IN A PRISON CAMP—
I DON'T HAVE TO IMAGINE—I KNOW, DAMN YOU!
SURE, PRINCESS. EASY NOW
190
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
STRANGE. I DID NOT THINK THAT YOUNG WOMAN COULD BE MOVED BY THE PLIGHT OF A SMALL CHILD
NO? REMEMBER THE PRISON-CAMP AT KALYROS? YOU WERE THERE TWENTY YEARS BACK
WHAT D'YOU RECKON THAT WAS LIKE FOR A SIX-YEAR-OLD GIRL ON 'ER OWN?
KALYROS? MY GOD, IT WAS LIKE A CORNER OF HELL. BUT I RECALL NO CHILDREN. THEY COULD NOT HAVE SURVIVED IT
THERE'S ONE WHO DID, MATEY, AN' HALF A-DOZEN REFUGEE AN D P CAMPS AFTER THAT. YOU'VE LIFTED THE LID ON EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED TO HER IN THOSE YEARS
191
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
YOUNG WOMAN I OWE YOU AN APOLOGY. YOUR FRIEND HAS TOLD ME SOMETHING OF YOUR CHILDHOOD
IT'S LONG PAST NOW. I DON'T REMEMBER MY PARENTS. BUT I USED TO DREAM THAT THEY'D COME FOR ME ONE DAY
I EXPECT YOUR DAUGHTER HAS THE SAME DREAM
I WANT TO MAKE THAT DREAM COME TRUE... YOU WANT TO PREVENT IT, AND FOR GOOD REASON
WE ARE BOTH TRYING TO DO WHAT WE MUST.. BUT AT LEAST WE HAVE UNDERSTANDING FOR EACH OTHER AND NOT ENMITY
YES
92
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
IN THE CAMP AT KALYROS, HUMAN BEINGS FOUGHT LIKE ANIMALS OVER A SCRAP OF ROTTING OFFAL AND SHE WAS ALONE THERE - A CHILD.
SHE'S NOT FEELING SORRY FOR HERSELF Y'KNOW... SHE NEVER HAS.
NO. BUT SHE CAN HAVE LITTLE SORROW TO SPARE FOR MY OWN CHILD, I WOULD THINK
HOUR TO DAWN, PRINCESS— TIME WE MOVED
RIGHT, WILLIE
IN MODESTY'S HAND—THE DEADLY LITTLE KONGO
193

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
YOU WANT ME TO HAVE HIM ATTACHED WITH THE 'CUFFS, PRINCESS?
NO, WILLIE... THERE'S NO NEED NOW
A BLUR OF MOVEMENT AS MODESTY STRIKES WITH THE KONGO..
...RIGHT, DOCTOR KOSSUTH... YOU CAN GO BACK TO DE STA.. I'VE QUIT
134
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
HEAD DUE WEST AND YOU'LL STRIKE THE BEACH IN FIFTEEN MINUTES - THE YACHT WILL STILL BE THERE
YOU ARE.. LETTING ME GO?
YES, DAMN YOU! GO BACK HOME TO HUNGARY! FIND THIS CHILD OF YOURS...
AND LOOK AFTER HER.. SEE SHE'S NOT FRIGHTENED - BUT FOR GOD'S SAKE GO NOW!
135
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
KOSSUTH TURNS TO GO THEN STOPS
I WILL NOT TRY TO THANK YOU... BUT I AM CONCERNED FOR YOUR SAFETY
YOU HAVE BETRAYED YOUR COLLEAGUE - SURELY YOU WILL BE IN GREAT DANGER WHEN HE RECOVERS?
I WON'T BE IN ANY DANGER FROM HIM... THAT'S ABOUT THE ONE THING I CAN BE SURE OF JUST NOW
196
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
WILLIE GARVIN STIRS, OPENS HIS EYES
LIE STILL FOR A BIT, WILLIE. I HIT YOU PRETTY HARD - 'M SORRY
YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO CHILL ME PRINCESS - F YOU'RE FOR LETTING KOSSUTH GO THAT'S OKAY WITH ME - 'M NOT BOTHERED ABOUT SIR GERALD OR ANYONE
I KNOW WILLIE LOVE - BUT F 'M GOING TO PULL A JOLSY DOUBLE-CROSSING STAB IN THE BACK, THEN AT LEAST I'LL CARRY T ALL MYSELF
197

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
I WOULDN'T BLAME YOU FOR WALKING OUT ON ME, WILLIE...
FUNNY... I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LET KOSSUTH GO— BUT I DIDN'T RECKON ON THE KNOCK-OUT BIT
BUT IF I HAVE A CHOICE, I'D RATHER YOU BEAT ME STUPID AND CALLED IT QUITS
YOU ONLY DID IT SO I WOULDN'T CARRY THE CAN WITH YOU, PRINCESS... I JUST WISH I'D THOUGHT OF IT FIRST, THAT'S ALL
197
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
IT NOT GOING TO BE A MILK-RUN GETTING TO CONAKRY, PRINCESS... WE'LL EAT OKAY, AND MOST OF THE BIG GAME'S FURTHER INLAND...
BUT THERE'S CROCS— AN' WE'VE GOT A LOT OF RIVERS TO CROSS
THE BIGGEST RIVER I'VE GOT TO CROSS IS TELLING SIR GERALD WHAT I'VE DONE, WILLIE...
198
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
LONDON... AFTER THREE GRUELLING WEEKS THROUGH THE JUNGLE TO CONAKRY, A BOAT TO FREETOWN, AND AN AIR-PASSAGE HOME!
FRASER? MODESTY BLAISE
I'VE JUST GOT IN— CAN I SEE SIR GERALD IF I COME ROUND IN ABOUT AN HOUR?
THE BRIEF REPORT YOU SENT ON BY COURIER GAVE THE FACTS, MISS BLAISE— ANY EXPLANATION SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE
OF COURSE... BUT HE'S ENTITLED TO SAY HIS PIECE TO ME, FRASER— TELL HIM I'LL BE ALONE. WILLIE GARVIN DISAPPEARED AT LONDON AIRPORT
200
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
YOU KNEW DOCTOR KOSSUTH'S IMPORTANCE TO THE WEST... YOU FOUND HE WAS A DEFECTOR, NOT A KIDNAP-VICTIM... AND YOU LET HIM GO!
I CAN'T DEMAND AN EXPLANATION— YOUR WORK FOR ME IS QUITE UNOFFICIAL—
MY REASONS WOULDN'T IMPRESS YOU AT ALL, SIR GERALD
201
THEY MADE SENSE TO WILLIE GARVIN... HE WAS HERE HALF AN HOUR AGO, EXPLAINING ON YOUR BEHALF WITH GREAT BELLIGERENCE
WILLIE!... SO THAT'S WHY HE FADED OUT AT THE AIRPORT

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
YOU KNOW WILLIE GARVIN HAD NO PART IN WHAT I DID?
I KNOW YOU DIDN'T ALLOW HIM A PART — YOU KNOCKED HIM OUT
CONFOUND IT, MODESTY! I JUST CAN'T SEE YOU OF ALL PEOPLE ACTING ON AN EMOTIONAL IMPULSE!
I DIDN'T... I THOUGHT IT THROUGH FROM ALL SIDES
YOUR SIDE, KOSSUTH'S, THE AMERICANS', THE WESTERN ALLIANCE... AND THE ONE SIDE I KNOW BETTER THAN ANY OF YOU— Kossuth's child, the little girl's side
208
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
203
YOU RATED THE LIFE OF ONE CHILD MORE IMPORTANT THAN KEEPING A SCIENTIFIC GENIUS FOR THE WEST?
THAT WAS EASY
...I DON'T GIVE A DAMN ABOUT A SCIENTIST GOING ONE WAY OR THE OTHER, SIR GERALD — IT'S NOTHING NEW, AND IT NEVER SEEMS TO MAKE MUCH DIFFERENCE IN THE LONG RUN
FOR ME, WHAT TWISTED THE THUMBSCREWS WAS CHOOSING WHETHER TO FAIL YOU OR FAIL THE CHILD
YE-E-ES... WITH YOUR BACKGROUND, ABOUT THE ONLY DEAL IN THE PACK I COULD LOSE
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
I REALIZE YOU WON'T WANT ME TO WORK FOR YOU AGAIN... I GUESS AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE IS HOPPING MAD, TOO
NO... IT WAS A LONG-SHOT AND THEY EXPECTED FAILURE
SO THEY'RE WELL-PLEASED WITH SECOND BEST — IN FACT I'VE A GLOWING MESSAGE OF THANKS TO PASS ON TO YOU
WHAT DO YOU MEAN — SECOND BEST?
204
I MEAN THAT THOUGH KOSSUTH CAN'T WORK FOR THE WEST, HE CAN'T WORK FOR THE EAST EITHER... HE'S DEAD, MODESTY
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
KOSSUTH — DEAD? HOW?
LET'S TAKE IT FROM WHEN YOU AND WILLIE DIDN'T COME OFF DE S'A'S YACHT AT FREETOWN — THAT MADE US THINK, RATHER
THEN THE AMERICAN TRACKING PLANE SAW THE YACHT BEACHED... IT LOOKED VERY MUCH LIKE YOUR HANDWRITING
IN SIX HOURS A U.S. NAVY DESTROYER WAS THERE, DOING A FRIENDS-IN-NEED ACT — MEN SWARMING OVER THE BEACH AND YACHT — SHORT OF VIOLENCE, DE S'A COULDN'T STOP THEM
205

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
WHEN KOSSUTH CAME OUT OF THE JUNGLE, SHOUTING THAT HE WAS BACK, THE U.S. NAVY WAS WELL IN OCCUPATION...
SO HOW DID HE DIE?
KAVERIN SHOT HIM— JUST LIKE THAT
YES... THE COLD EQUATION YOU MENTIONED BEFORE
IT SEEMS BOTH SIDES EVALUATED KOSSUTH THE SAME WAY— BETTER DEAD THAN WORKING FOR THE OPPOSITION
206
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
SO NOW KOSSUTH'S DEAD ... AND THE CHILD HAS NOBODY
AT LEAST SHE'S NO LONGER A HOSTAGE UNDER THREAT— YOU MUSTN'T BLAME YOURSELF TOO MUCH, MODESTY
I DON'T, SIR GERALD... I DID WHAT I HAD TO, AND FROM THEN ON IT WORKED OUT THE WAY IT WAS WRITTEN
I LEARNED ALL ABOUT THAT, CENTURIES AGO...
207
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
I FANCY WILLIE GARVIN WILL BE ANXIOUS TO KNOW THE OUTCOME OF THIS MEETING...
WILL YOU BE GETTING IN TOUCH WITH HIM?
I THINK I'LL DRIVE DOWN TO THAT LITTLE COUNTRY PUB OF HIS AND SPEND A FEW DAYS THERE
HE TELLS ME IT IS A HAVEN OF RUSTIC PEACE... JUST WHAT YOU NEED
OCCASIONAL DOSES, YES— BUT I GUESS WE ARE BOTH TOO DUMB TO ENJOY THE QUIET LIFE AS A STAPLE DIET
208
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
MODESTY LEAVES SIR GERALD'S OFFICE...
YES... DO THAT FRASER...
I TAKE IT WE CROSS HER OFF OUR LIST AS UNRELIABLE NOW, SIR GERALD?
DO THAT, AS SOON AS THEY PROVIDE ME WITH ROBOTS SMART ENOUGH TO DO HER KIND OF JOB— NICE MACHINES WITH NO HUMAN FOIBLES
BUT UNTIL THEN, WE'LL JUST HAVE TO CARRY ON USING THE GOOD OLD-FASHIONED EXPENDABLE HUMAN BEING, LIKE MODESTY BLAISE— EVEN IF SHE DOES HAVE A MIND OF HER OWN
209

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
AN HOUR AFTER CLOSING-TIME, AT "THE TREADMILL"...
I'VE FIXED UP A ROOM ALL NICE FOR YOU, PRINCESS — 'OW ABOUT A NIGHT-CAP?
THANKS, WILLIE... HOPE I'M NOT IN THE WAY... YOU HADN'T GOT ANYTHING SPECIAL ON?
COMPANY, OR ANYTHING?
WE'RE ALL CLEAR WITH SIR G., THEN?
NO, HONEST! A NICE LONG KIP, AN' A BIT OF POACHING TOMORROW NIGHT, THAT'S ALL
YES... HE SEEMS TO FEEL THAT WHAT MADE ME QUIT ON THIS JOB WAS A NON-RECURRING FACTOR...
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
FUNNY HOW A JOB THAT GOES SOUR ALWAYS MAKES YOU FEEL TIRED AFTERWARDS...
M'MM... STILL, IT SOON PASSES
'EAVINESS MAY ENDURE FOR A NIGHT, BUT JOY COMETH IN THE MORNING — PSALM THIRTY, RIGHT?
I EXPECT SO, WILLIE LOVE, YOU'RE THE EXPERT — I DIDN'T SPEND A YEAR IN THE COOP WITH NOTHING BUT A PSALTER TO READ!